

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Robert Roloson Houses

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

3213 - 3219 Calumet Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Chicago

STATE

Illinois

VICINITY OF

CODE

17

1st

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Ralph Metcalfe

COUNTY

Cook

CODE

31

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

### CATEGORY

DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

STRUCTURE

SITE

OBJECT

### OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC

PRIVATE

BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

IN PROCESS

BEING CONSIDERED

### STATUS

OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

NO

### PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE

COMMERCIAL

EDUCATIONAL

ENTERTAINMENT

GOVERNMENT

INDUSTRIAL

MILITARY

MUSEUM

PARK

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

RELIGIOUS

SCIENTIFIC

TRANSPORTATION

OTHER:

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorder of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Cook County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Chicago

STATE

Illinois

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Illinois Historic Structures Survey

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

1800 South Prairie Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Chicago

STATE

Illinois

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This is a group of four party-wall residences designed to seem from the street a single building. The lot size of each is 20 x 125 feet. Originally there was a range of buildings behind them facing on King Drive (formerly South Park) but these were removed when South Park was widened into a boulevard in the mid-twenties.

Foundations are stone while all exterior walls are solid brick except the street front which is brick trimmed with dressed limestone. Originally there was a paved terrace in front of each house surrounded by a stone and terra-cotta balustrade. The roofs are slate at the front where they rise in steep gables and flat behind the transverse gable. A buff Roman face-brick is used on the front, Chicago common on the other outside walls, and white glazed brick in the light court. Windows are mostly counter-balanced sash throughout. Those facing the light court from the stair hall originally had clear leaded glass in them.

Each house has about 900 square feet of basement and about 3000 square feet of living space above. The major architectural feature of the interiors are the 18 foot square stair-halls that rise up to large skylights. Each has a fireplace at the first floor level and is defined by stair railings, the balusters being plain pieces of wood, square in plan, rotated 45° to produce a diamond shape in plan.

The floor levels are staggered front to rear like Belgian townhouses of the period. Entry is at ground level past a reception room, and past a door to the basement, and up to the hall at first floor level. From the stair hall there is an arched passageway that passes a library seen through Ionic columns in wood and leads to a dining room, pantry, rear stairs and kitchen. At the front, a half level above the first floor is a living room and fireplace. On the bedroom level the sleeping and bath rooms repeat the shapes of the rooms below. Under the front gable is an additional room at attic level.

There are fireplaces in the hall, library, reception and living rooms. A central heating plant served each house. Ceilings are very high with about a three foot crawl space boxed in under the roof and second floor.

### History

The Roloson Houses were designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1894 for Robert W. Roloson-in-law of Edward Waller, Wright's River Forest patron. In its massing and major subdivisions, the design is reminiscent of English Tudor architecture, becoming popular at the time as a revival style. Onto this historic type, Wright grafted his own geometrical detailing learned from his master Sullivan, whom he had left the year before.

The houses were built by Roloson as an investment and in their compact plans and narrow widths, they followed the precedent of other row houses in Chicago. The regular of their facades is, however, less common in the Chicago of 1894 of irregular Queen Ann and Romanesque row houses. Wright's spatial treatment with open stairwell beneath a skylight and the different levels of front and back is also unusual.

As the area declined, the houses were divided into apartments. Wright buffs and antique hunters stripped away the front balustrades. Although only one of the houses is presently occupied, a southside banker who owns two of them and is acquiring the other two, plans to restore them as single family residences.

# 101 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      1894

BUILDER/ARCHITECT      Frank Lloyd Wright

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

These houses are of special interest as the only surviving row houses by Frank Lloyd Wright. As representatives of Wright's earliest independent work, they are also very important. Interior and exterior details are of the early partly contemporaneous, partly original types found in the Winslow House of the same year, and thus afford especially interesting evidence of the evolution of Wright's architecture. The emphasis on interior space is of significance as the beginning of this important quality in Wright's architecture.

# MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Manson, Grant. Frank Lloyd Wright to 1910.  
 Hitchcock, H.R. In the Nature of Materials.

## GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .3

UTM REFERENCES

A	16	448700	4631500	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Paul Sprague

ORGANIZATION

DATE 24 February 1975

STREET & NUMBER

1800 S. Prairie Avenue

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Chicago

STATE

Illinois

## STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

*William J. Dean*

TITLE

*Director*

DATE

*1-9-76*

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
 ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE ILLINOIS

Date Entered JUN 30 1977

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Roloson, Robert, Houses	Chicago Cook County

**COPY OF CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION**

Also Notified

Hon. Charles H. Percy  
Hon. Adlai E. Stevenson  
Hon. Ralph H. Metcalfe